

EPI Update for Friday, July 8, 2016
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **'Cocooning' reduces pertussis in infants**
- **Few pathogens found on mass transit surfaces**
- **The many questions of CADE**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

'Cocooning' reduces pertussis in infants

A presentation at the 2016 Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting described a greater than 50 percent decrease in pertussis among infants following the 2013 passing of a law in New York requiring that Tdap vaccine be offered to all caregivers of infants born in hospitals.

Protecting infants from diseases like pertussis and influenza by vaccinating family members and babysitters, known as 'cocooning', has long been recommended by public health. According to the CDC, the best way to protect infants from pertussis is to vaccinate mothers while they are pregnant, encourage those who will be around the baby to be vaccinated at least two weeks prior to meeting the child, and ensure the child is vaccinated on time, starting at 2 months of age.

For more CDC information about cocooning, visit

www.cdc.gov/pertussis/pregnant/mom/protection.html.

Few pathogens found on mass transit surfaces

In the past decade or so, there have been occasional media reports about bacteria found on things like doorknobs, keyboards, etc., implying that this was bad and people touching these things would become ill. A recent study of the Boston subway transit system found that of the various organisms found on surfaces, the vast majority were normal flora from human skin and saliva. Few organisms with virulence or antibiotic resistance were found. Characterizing the organisms normally found on these surfaces may enable routine surveillance to be performed in the future, allowing for early identification of outbreaks or the presence of antibiotic resistance.

To read the study, visit msystems.asm.org/content/1/3/e00018-16.

The many questions of CADE

CADE knows the answer to many questions that 'plague' humankind. Does a bear defecate in the woods? Bears can and will go anywhere they wish. The same can be said of a raccoon.

So what happens when you go out to your pool on a hot day, swim raft inflated, Beach Boys music on the radio, and find that a raccoon has chosen your pool to poop in?

Unfortunately, this is more than just a weird question since many raccoons carry the raccoon round worm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*) in their intestinal tract. Eggs are released from the raccoon in feces. Human infection is rare, but can be severe as the parasite may invade organs, eyes or even the brain. The chlorine found in pools will NOT kill *Baylisascaris* eggs. So if raccoon or raccoon feces in a pool, immediately close the pool to swimmers and have the feces tested before opening it up again.

For more information on raccoons and pools visit (yes - CDC does have a whole page on raccoon feces in pools – who knew?)

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/animals/raccoons-and-pools.html.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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Iowa Department of Public Health

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